

commodity prices and limiting supply. This led to political unrest across the globe. It concentrated among developing countries with large, food-insecure, poor urban populations.

While this was indeed a perfect storm of events, the underlying issues that created this crisis continued. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, 80 to 90 percent of all cereal prices remain 25 percent higher than they were before the crisis began. In many Asian and Latin American and Caribbean countries, prices are still more than 25 percent higher than in the precrisis period of time. In the wake of the economic crisis, the World Food Programme began receiving requests for assistance even from countries that previously were able to provide for themselves.

The peripheral effects of food insecurity are considerable. High rates of hunger are shown to be linked to gender inequality, especially in terms of education and literacy, which also negatively affects the rate of child malnutrition. This number is stunning. It is estimated that 60 percent of the world's chronically hungry are women and girls—60 percent—20 percent of whom are children under the age of 5. It is almost incalculable. Those numbers are staggering and should do more than just bother us and just inform our conscience; they should also motivate us to do something about this crisis. I cite these figures, and too often in Washington we are guilty of doing just that—citing figures. But they have real impact and real meaning.

I have had the privilege of personally working with some very special women in Pennsylvania who took it upon themselves to really highlight some of these issues. The Witnesses to Hunger is a project that started in Philadelphia, PA. These women were given cameras to photograph their own lives, to tell us the truth of their experiences, and to raise awareness on many critical issues, including specifically hunger.

Last year, I had the honor, as did my wife Teresa, of bringing their exhibit to Washington, and in November we launched a tour across Pennsylvania to highlight this issue. I cannot begin to describe how moved I was—as were so many others who saw this exhibit—to see the photographs taken by these women and to hear their stories of hunger and of poverty. Their bravery and rare courage in sharing the struggles they face to provide a safe, nurturing home for their children will always stay with me.

These mothers who brought Witnesses to Hunger to life are constant reminders that the programs we in Congress advocate for and the new initiatives we can develop can have a profound impact on people's lives, whether it is in our towns and communities in Pennsylvania or in any other State or around the world, because this is a problem our world and our country face.

Hunger in a country such as Pakistan poses both a humanitarian and a secu-

rity issue. Last year, over 77 million people in that country, Pakistan, were considered food insecure by the World Food Programme. That is nearly half of their population. As their military conducts its continued operations against extremist forces, their numbers could increase. Hunger and competition for food can lead to further instability and potentially undermine the Pakistani Government's leadership at a very critical time.

The global food crisis is still a serious problem, and despite the efforts of the administration, we still have a lot of catching up to do in order to respond properly. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the U.S. commitment to agricultural development has declined in recent years, though emergency food assistance continues at robust levels. Worldwide, the share of agriculture in development assistance has fallen from a high of 13 percent in 1985 to 4 percent between 2002 and 2007. The U.S. development assistance to African agriculture fell from its peak of about \$500 million in 1988 to less than \$100 million in 2006. We can do a lot better than that.

The USAID has been hardest hit during this period. The USAID once considered agricultural expertise to be a core strength but today operates under diminished capacity. That is an understatement. Here is what I mean. In 1990, USAID employed 181 agricultural specialists, but in 2009 just 22—from 181 to 22 in just those years, less than 20 years. That number has gone up from 22 recently, with the new administration, but it is still far too few to work on this problem.

In the 1970s, the U.S. Government sponsored 20,000 annual scholarships for future leadership in agriculture, engineering, and related fields. Today, that number has fallen to less than 900. So we are not developing the workforce and expertise we need.

We simply don't currently have adequate infrastructure in our government to respond to this crisis. The administration is making progress, though. The administration's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, known by the acronym GHFSI, is a comprehensive approach to food security based on country- and community-led planning and collaboration. I welcome this opportunity to hear directly from the administration about this effort. While I know the Obama administration has worked assiduously to coordinate an interagency process and selection criteria for country participation around the world, questions remain in terms of overall leadership of the initiative, as well as its plan to develop internal expertise and capacity that is sustainable over the long term.

In the Senate, we have worked to bring attention to the world's hungry. Senator LUGAR, as I mentioned before, a respected leader in this field for decades, and I have joined together to introduce the Global Food Security Act.

I will highlight three provisions before I conclude.

First, the Global Food Security Act would provide enhanced coordination within the U.S. Government so that USAID, the Department of Agriculture, and other agencies are working together and not at cross-purposes.

Second, this bill would expand U.S. investment in the agricultural productivity of developing nations, so that other nations facing escalating food prices can rely less on emergency food assistance and instead take steps to expand their own crop production. Every dollar invested in agricultural research and development generates \$9 for every dollar worth of food in the developing worlds.

Third, this bill, the Global Food Security Act, will modernize our system of emergency food assistance so that it is more flexible and can provide aid on short notice. We do that by authorizing a new \$500 million fund for U.S. emergency food assistance.

This is one of those rare occasions—unfortunately, too rare—where a serious crisis was greeted with substantial response by an administration—in this case, the Obama administration—as well as bipartisan collaboration in the Senate and the House. I am encouraged that there has been positive movement toward fundamentally changing how we look at food security issues. Such support, however, is not permanent, and we should enact this multiyear authorization bill to ensure that such congressional support exists in the future, many years from now. We cannot wait for another massive food crisis before taking action on this legislation. This is the right thing to do, and we will ultimately enhance the security of the United States and our allies.

Mr. President, this isn't just a matter of being summoned by our conscience. That we know is part of the reason we are doing this. This is also a grave national security issue for us and our allies. For that reason and so many others, we need to pass the Global Food Security Act and support the administration's efforts on the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO BRIAN DUFFY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise to honor Mr. Brian Duffy of Louisville, KY, for his hard work and support on behalf of Kentucky's World War II and terminally ill veterans. Mr. Duffy founded the Bluegrass Honor Flight chapter in 2007. Through his leadership, and the support of numerous donations and volunteers, the Bluegrass Honor Flight chapter has been able to fly nearly 600 veterans from Kentucky to Washington, DC, providing these brave patriots the opportunity to see their memorial firsthand.

Today, I wish to congratulate Mr. Duffy, himself a veteran, for recently being named 2010's official

“Thunderator” responsible for starting the “Thunder over Louisville” firework show. He was so named because of his dedication to the Bluegrass Honor Flight organization.

I know my colleagues will join me in honoring Mr. Duffy for his tireless advocacy on behalf of veterans.

GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAYS

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I wish to speak about a resolution designating April 23 through 25, 2010, as “Global Youth Service Days.” S. Res. 493 recognizes and commends the significant community service efforts that youth are making in communities across the country and around the world on the last weekend in April and every day. This resolution also encourages the citizens of the United States to acknowledge and support these volunteer efforts. S. Res. 493 passed the Senate by unanimous consent on April 20, 2010. This sends a very strong message of support to the thousands of youth across our great Nation who contribute positively to their communities—your efforts are recognized and appreciated.

Beginning this Friday, April 23, youth from across the United States and around the world will carry out community service projects in areas ranging from hunger to literacy to the environment. Through this service, many will embark on a lifelong path of service and civic engagement.

This event is not isolated to one weekend a year. Global Youth Service Days is an annual public awareness and education campaign that highlights the valuable contributions that young people make to their communities throughout the year.

The participation of youth in community service provides an opportunity to identify and address the needs of their communities and make positive differences in the world around them, learn leadership, organizational skills, and gain insights into the problems of their fellow citizens.

High-quality service-learning activities help young people make important connections between the school curriculum and the challenges they see in their communities. Youth who are engaged in volunteer service and service-learning activities do better in school than their classmates who do not volunteer are also more likely to avoid risky behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse. Service within the community contributes positively to young people’s character development, civic participation, and philanthropic activity as adults.

It is important, therefore, that the Senate encourage youth to engage in community service and to congratulate them for the service they provide.

In an effort to recognize and support youth volunteers in my State, I am proud to acknowledge some of the activities that will occur this year in Alaska in observance of National and Global Youth Service Days:

Anchorage’s Promise, which works to mobilize all sectors of the community to build the character and competence of Anchorage’s children and youth, has sponsored the annual KidsDay events in Anchorage again this year. Youth provided significant service to their peers and to adults who attended KidsDay activities:

The Spirit of Youth Teen Action Council’s Herb Project provided youth with the task of building organic hanging gardens for local elders who are unable to get out and garden this year. The Alaska Botanical Garden also supported this project with important tips about the benefits of starting your own garden at home.

Operation Support Our Soldiers, SOS, made cards for our military deployed overseas to show support and appreciation for the sacrifice that these brave men and women make every day.

The Alaska Teen Media Institute also participated in the day interviewing youth and giving tips on media production.

Teen volunteers from Anchorage conducted surveys of youth attending the 2010 KidsDay and also surveyed vendor booths regarding volunteer and employment opportunities.

Chugiak High School Junior ROTC assisted Anchorage’s Promise this year at KidsDay by providing security to protect children.

In addition to the KidsDay events, young people from every region of Alaska will serve their communities in the following ways:

The Juneau Alaska Youth for Environmental Action has been working with the Juneau-Douglas High School Food Services, to transition from plastic disposable silverware to reusable metal silverware.

SAGA Juneau will be working in coordination with the Juneau School District to provide volunteer opportunities to youth.

Members of the Chugiak Family Career and Community Leaders of America coordinated four activities to earn funds for the Malowi Children’s Village. They raised \$560 for mosquito bed nets which will buy 260 nets to protect children from deadly insect bites.

Anchorage Boy Scout troops teamed up with local supermarkets in order to collect food for the homeless.

The Music Canvas in Anchorage offered a free sing-a-long class for families with young children.

Shishmaref Village led a trip with skilled hunters to teach the youth traditional hunting and survival tactics.

An ongoing project from the students at the Alaska Teen Media Institute involves production of a public affairs radio show on KNBA 90.3 FM Anchorage. “In Other News” airs the last Saturday of the month and features news and views from the teen perspective.

Teens of Covenant House Alaska will be partnering with Abundant Life Generation to outreach to women and children in Nepal that have experienced sexual exploitation from human trafficking.

Homer residents helped clean the city. Cash prizes were awarded to the top three “trash collectors,” and over 650 bags of trash were collected.

Over 750 volunteers joined together in Soldotna to help rebuild the local playgrounds in the city.

Cadets from the North Pole High School Air Force Junior ROTC collected donations and helped out the Alaska Blood Bank in Fairbanks.

Teen volunteers in Anchorage helped prepare materials for the annual summer reading celebration.

Youth assisted Anchorage’s Promise with getting the meaning behind the five promises out into the community.

The Alaska Food Bank offered a volunteer opportunity to help the Boy Scouts of America sort out their donations from this year’s Scouting for Food Drive.

Thousands of youth volunteers gathered to help clean up the neighborhoods of Anchorage.

The Alaska High School Challenge sponsored by the Blood Bank of Alaska increases awareness in the community about the importance of donating blood and allows high schools to compete with one another for recognition of saving the most lives in Alaska.

The PANIC/Mountaineer Sports Program cleaned and painted the Mount View Community Center Boys and Girls Club.

Sterling Community Club youth helped to salvage road kill moose in order to feed hungry community members.

Boys and Girls Club youth were instructed on bike safety.

Eagle River Boys and Girls Club helped to show support for troops by making care packages during the holidays.

Port Graham School students partnered up with elders in the community to learn more about traditional knowledge and cultural importance.

Wrangell youth worked with the Women in Safe Homes project and AmeriCorps members to create artwork for the Wrangell Medical Center.

Youth Group of Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship made and distributed Easter baskets to homeless youth.

Students at Barry Craig Stewart Kassan School were involved in a week of activities that focused on building skills such as teamwork and communication.

Students at Tok School were given the opportunity to “adopt” a person whom they found to be a positive influence on their lives.

Eagle River Lion’s Club teamed up with youth to provide an Easter egg hunt for the community.

The community of Dillingham joined together to celebrate the achievements of local youth and elders.

Students with the Yakutat High National Honor Society held a community health fair.

Metervit Youth Action Group in New Stuyahok held an event to discuss